DX LISTENING DIGEST 4-022, February 5, 2004
edited by Glenn Hauser, http://www.worldofradio.com

Items from DXLD may be reproduced and re-reproduced only if full
credit be maintained at all stages and we be provided exchange copies.
DXLD may not be reposted in its entirety without permission.

Materials taken from Arctic or originating from Olle Alm and not
having a commercial copyright are exempt from all restrictions of
noncommercial, noncopyrighted reusage except for full credits

For restrixions and searchable 2004 contents archive see
http://www.worldofradio.com/dxldmid.html

NOTE: If you are a regular reader of DXLD, and a source of DX news but
have not been sending it directly to us, please consider yourself
obligated to do so. Thanks, Glenn

NEXT AIRINGS OF WORLD OF RADIO 1219:
Sat 0000 on Studio X, Momigno, Italy, 1584
Sat 0900 on WRN1 to Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, webcast
Sat 0955 on WNQM, Nashville, 1300
Sat 1130 on WWCR 5070
Sat 1900 on IBC Radio webcast http://www.ibcradio.com
Sat 1930 on WPKN Bridgeport, 89.5, webcast http://www.wpkn.org
Sat 2130 on WWCR 12160
Sat 2130 on WBCQ 17495-CUSB
Sun 0130 on WBCQ 9330-CLSB
Sun 0330 on WWCR 5070
Sun 0730 on WWCR 3210
Sun 0845 on Ozone Radio, Ireland, 6201v, time variable
Sun 1100 on WRN1 to North America, webcast; also KSFC 91.9 Spokane WA,
webcast and WDWN 89.1 Auburn NY; maybe KTRU 91.7 Houston
TX, each with webcasts
Sun 1600 on IBC Radio, webcast http://www.ibcradio.com
Sun 2000 on Studio X, Momigno, 1584
Mon 0515 on WBCQ 7415, webcast http://wbcq.us
Tue 0400 on SIUE Web Radio http://www.siue.edu/WEBRADIO/
Wed 1030 on WWCR 9475

WRN ONDEMAND:
http://new.wrn.org/listeners/stations/station.php?StationID=24
OUR ONDEMAND AUDIO [also for CONTINENT OF MEDIA, MUNDO RADIAL]:
Check http://www.worldofradio.com/audiomid.html
WORLD OF RADIO 1219 (high version):
(stream)   http://www.w4uvh.net/wor1219h.ram
(download) http://www.w4uvh.net/wor1219h.rm
(summary) http://www.worldofradio.com/wor1219.html [soon]

WORLD OF RADIO 1219 (low version):
(stream)   http://www.w4uvh.net/wor1219.ram
(download) http://www.w4uvh.net/wor1219.rm

** ALASKA. COMTECH TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORP. AWARDED CONTRACTS TOTALING APPROXIMATELY $12 MILLION FOR HIGH POWER AMPLIFIERS

MELVILLE, N.Y. -- (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Jan. 27, 2004 -- Comtech Telecommunications Corp. (Nasdaq: CMTL) announced today that its New York-based subsidiary, Comtech PST Corp., has received two contracts valued at approximately $12 million from SRI International for the design, development and production of radar pulsed high power amplifiers.

The majority of these high power (500 watt) amplifiers will be used on the Advanced Modular Incoherent Scatter Radar (AMISR) being developed by SRI under a multi-year grant from the National Science Foundation. The subcontract from SRI includes initial funding of approximately $4.0 million with options aggregating $7.7 million to be funded in Fiscal 2004 and 2005. Deliveries will begin in February 2004 and continue through early 2006, assuming full funding.

The AMISR system is a large, phased-array radar used for studying the Earth's upper, ionized atmosphere. Scientists and students from around the world will use the radar to conduct studies of the rapidly changing upper atmosphere and observe space weather events, which can damage and interrupt satellite and electronic communications and even knock out power grids.

Comtech PST Corp. secured this highly competitive program based on its innovative design coupled with the automated manufacturing strength of its sister company, Comtech EF Data Corp., located in Tempe, AZ.

Last month, Comtech PST Corp. received an order for approximately $300,000 from SRI International for identical amplifiers for the High Frequency Active Aurora Research Station at Gakona, Alaska. These amplifiers will be used in initial customer testing of the Modular UHF Ionospheric Radar. . .
http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20040127005463&newsLang=en
(via Jilly Dybka, DXLD)

** ANGUILLA [and non]. List of radio stations here and nearby islands:
http://news.ai/ref/axaradio2004.html
(Bob Green`s Anguilla News via Rod Thompson, WTFDA-AM via DXLD)

** ARGENTINA. Radio Libre AM 1640 --- Estimados Amigos: Reporto la escucha de esta emisora (para mi nueva); ya lo confirmaran los

especialistas (Marcelo o Arnaldo). Aproximadamente desde las 2100 UT sintonicÈ esta frecuencia pensando que se trataba de la emisora que emite irregularmente aquÌ, "Radio Bolivia", pero cuando escuchÈ la primera ID, me quedaron dudas, asÌ que la seguÌ escuchando y se identifica como Radio Libre AM 1640, telÈfono 6327-5350. Su formato musical es folklore y tango. Cordiales 73 (Nicol·s Eramo, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Pienso que abre emisiones alrededor de las 1000 UT y cierra antes de las 0100, algo complicado para que vos la puedas chequear durante la semana, a lo mejor el fin de semana. Otro telÈfono dado en uno de los programas previos al cierre fue el siguiente 4919-3651 (pero no estoy tan seguro de que sea correcto; este sÌ se parece al de Radio Bolivia (4919-3659). La modulaciÛn no era muy buena (lo que nota que est·n en prueba) y fue en un programa previo al cierre, habÌa mucho splash de la emisora de 1630 y la emisora estía saliendo en 1639.82.
PD: chequea esta p·gina:
http://www.lafogata.org/003movi/movi7/mov_radio.htm
(Un abrazo, Nicol·s Eramo, Feb 5, ConexiÛn Digital via DXLD)

** CANADA. Has anyone noticed that Toronto's 740 has dropped adult standards for talk (Dave Hughes, http://www.dcrtv.org/mailbag.html Feb 5 via DXLD)

That's news to the station. But quite an assumption. Adult standards, big band (on as I type) and much more continues. The only thing that changed was to add an information / call-in show from midnight until 2 am (EST) with a live host and different themes during the week (dining, car-care, outdoors, etc). Music all night was great but it doesn't bring in advertising revenue. The format is unchanged (Brian Smith, AM 740, ODXA, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

I heard them promote open line programming nightly from midnight to 2 am --- which, I think, is something fairly new. I'm listening right now (9:25 pm) and they're still pumpin' out the nostalgia. The station has apparently hit hard financial times as they recently gave the boot to their morning man because they couldn't afford him. Not a good sign! My guess is the talk programming is actually sold airtime to generate some revenue in a way-off-peak time period (Greg Schatzmann, Belleville, ON, ODXA via DXLD)

** CHINA. 6937, Yunnan PBS (presumed), 1127-1139 Feb. 4, Listed Minority Service with barely audible talks, at times over wind instrumental music. Poor/weak (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** COSTA RICA. "Last November, the United Nations stood idly by while a band of armed men shut down Costa Rica's Radio For Peace

International...."

So begins an article by "Earth Island Journal" and "The Edge" on the eviction of RFPI by the University for Peace. Read the full text by visiting the link at the RFPI website: http://www.rfpi.org
(Joe Bernard, RFPI, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

A new article about RFPI, another MUST READ with some new info on what happened:
http://www.earthisland.org/project/newsPage2.cfm?newsID=539&pageID=177&subSiteID=44
(via RFPI website, DXLD)

** COSTA RICA [non]. In case you`re undecided about Gen. Clark, better read this:

'SCHOOL' OF HARD KNOCKS FOR WES By VINCENT MORRIS
 December 18, 2003 -- EXCLUSIVE

WASHINGTON - In a position that's likely to alienate some Democratic primary voters, retired Gen. Wesley Clark is a big booster of the controversial "School of the Americas" - which critics charge has history of graduating Latin American soldiers accused of rape, murder and torture. Clark fought for years to keep the school at Fort Benning, Ga., open, even testifying on its behalf in Congress, despite graduates like imprisoned Panamanian ex-strongman Manuel Noriega. . .
http://www.nypost.com/news/nationalnews/13799.htm
(NY Post via Clara Listensprechen, DXLD) But see also USA: Wes on VOA

** COSTA RICA [non]. QSL: BONAIRE: AWR, 6165, f/d "Noah's Ark" card with site and power (150 kW), pocket calendars and stickers in 89 days for 1 IRC. V/S "Illegible". (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** DJIBOUTI. Hi Glenn, In the schedule on the IBB Monitoring site, Djibouti is designated as MERN6. There is no other transmission with this network designation. So I'm not surprised if it was found not to be in parallel with other versions of Radio Sawa. 73, (Andy Sennitt, WORLD OF RADIO 1219, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Radio Sawa has meanwhile 6 different streams; you find the stream for each frequency in the IBB online schedule (code "MRN" = Middle East Radio Network). Djibouti 1431 carries the stream MRN6. 73s, (Bernd Trutenau, Lithuania, WORLD OF RADIO 1219, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Hi Bernd. Yep, I had a quick glance at IBB schedule and to me it seems 1431 is the only outlet carrying MRN6 (mw/sw). Well, now we are waiting for R Djibouti to appear on 4780 in the near future :) 73,

(Jari Savolainen, Finland, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD)

SAWA on 1431! I managed to pick them up around 2130 UT on 3/2/04 with a very weak signal, which is not meeting any other MW frequency for SAWA 990, 1260 or 1548!! So I reckon it's a new stream, apart from the streams they have now --- Egypt, Levant, Iraq and the Gulf. The frequency 1431 having 2 stations on / around the same frequency, VOR and VOIRI!! So I reckon SAWA might have a hard time reaching the listeners. All the best from Cairo (Tarek Zeidan, Egypt, Feb 5, dxing.info via DXLD)

** ETHIOPIA. 5500, Mekele, V. of Peace/V. of Democratic Eritrea, Feb 4 0358 - Sign on at 0357 noted. Very weak audio of IS heard. S7 signal level but audio very low. When the announcer began, lost almost all audio. Unable to positive ID short IS heard (Bob Montgomery, PA, Cumbre DX via DXLD)

Hi Bob. Yes, for a few days 5500 transmitter noted with very low audio level, at times no audio at all. 6350 seems to be OK. 73 (Jari Savolainen, Kuusankoski, Finland, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD)

** FINLAND. FINNISH CLUB STATIONS GAIN ACCESS TO 5 MHZ FREQUENCIES

Finnish club stations can now apply for Notices of Variation to allow them to operate on 5 MHz. The first contact was made on the 27th of January between OI3W and OI3AY. The following eight frequencies are available for use on upper sideband at up to 50 watts power: 5278.6, 5288.6, 5298.6, 5330.6, 5346.6, 5366.6, 5371.6 and 5398.6 kHz (Radio Society of Great Britain GB2RS Main News for February 8 posted February 4 by G4RGA on uk.radio.amateur via John Norfolk, DXLD)

** FRANCE [and non]. SAISON A04 --- De nombreuses surprises relatives ‡ l'usage des relais par plusieurs radiodiffuseurs internationaux seraient ‡ prÈvoir, avec notamment de drastiques rÈductions (EDXP WBM - 26 janvier 2004)

Le 25 janvier, Radio France Internationale a effectuÈ des rÈductions massives pour ses Èmissions en franÁais sur ondes courtes vers l'Europe de l'est, le Moyen-Orient et l'Afrique de l'Est (EDXP WBM - 26 janvier 2004)

NDR: attention! je donne cette information qui peut peut-Ítre cacher quelque chose... mais, aprËs avoir vÈrifiÈ et entendu la quasi totalitÈ de l'ensemble des frÈquences de RFI, ma conclusion est qu'il n'y a eu AUCUN changement (informations issues de http://perso.wanadoo.fr/jm.aubier via DXLD)

** FRANCE. Ciao! In the Exibition SALON DE LA RADIO 2004 of Paris last

weekend the Managers of Radio Superlustic have announced officially the transmissions on Medium Wave Band will start from next 21 March on 999 kHz Paris and 675 kHz Marseille. Also the Managers of Radio CIEL FM have announced officially they will start from 15 February to operate on 981 kHz from Paris. Albino Pedroia from Paris, PLAYDX ITALY
for more news visit:
http://www.superloustic.net/english/english.htm
http://www.cielradio.com/
(via Dario Monferini, DXLD)

** GUATEMALA. Glenn: Reporting my first reception of R. Verdad, Chiquimula, at exactly 4052.43, heard on 02.05.04 from 0557 to 0600: quite good reception, with a children's choir singing a simple folkish song, obviously in Spanish. At 0600 broadcast ceased with no announcements. 350 ft dipole; R-75; San Jose, CA. Best, (Steve Waldee, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** INTERNATIONAL VACUUM [non]. Quirks & Quarks Feb 7. Hello, This week on Quirks & Quarks our feature item is:

"A Hitchhiker's Guide to Mars."

With all the new images coming back from the Mars landers, and the plans for a new human space exploration program ultimately aimed at Mars, is it too early to start planning your adventure vacation to the Red Planet for, say, 2050? Well, if you are making those plans, we've got the book for you. It's called "A Traveler's Guide to Mars" and it contains descriptions of all the sights and scenes a Martian tourist would want to visit. No restaurant recommendations yet, but we hear the powdered eggs in a little cafe on Olympus Mons are excellent. We'll talk to the planetary scientist who wrote this fascinating tour guide.

Plus - the puzzling problem of Prozac and teens .... All this and more on Quirks & Quarks, Saturday right after the noon news on Radio One. (Bob McDonald, Host, Quirks & Quarks, CBC Radio One, Saturdays at 12:06 online at http://cbc.ca/quirks, Quirks mailing list via WORLD OF RADIO 1219, DXLD)

** ITALY [and non]. On Sunday Feb. 8, 2004 IRRS-Shortwave will air two special test broadcasts beamed on two new frequencies to N. Africa. Programs will be in Arabic with simultaneous Italian translation, at the following times:

SUNDAY Feb. 8, 2003, 1900-2000 UT, 100 kW :
1900-1925 UT on 12065 kHz, 100 kW
1930-2000 UT on 9390 kHz, 100 kW

Although we estimate that propagation will make possible reception in other areas, we especially welcome reception reports from listeners in the target area. Please send reception reports by email to: reports @ nexus.org - we will confirm almost immediately via email.

Also this coming week-end we will air a re-edited replay of Radiosix's "Record of the Year 2003". This one hour broadcast will be aired via our 20 kW Shortwave stream to Europe as follows:

Saturday Feb. 7, 2004 0930-1030 UT on 13,840 kHz, with repeats on:
Sunday   Feb. 8, 2004 0930-1030 UT on 13,840 kHz, and:
Thursday Feb. 12, 2004 2000-2100 UT on 5,775 kHz

Also for this broadcast you may send your comments and reception reports to reports @ nexus.org. We will forward all QSL requests to RadioSix for verification. Also check http://www.radiosix.com for more details.

We welcome reception reports for these broadcasts to reports @ nexus.org by snail-mail to: IRRS-Shortwave, PO Box 10980, I-20110 Milano, Italy. All broadcasts may be heard also in parallel to our Shortwave transmissions and all over the 24 hrs via streaming audio at: http://mp3.nexus.org

Please check: http://www.nexus.org/NEXUS-IBA/Schedules for detailed program and frequency schedules concerning our daily broadcasts, or http://www.egradio.org for more details on our Christian radio relays.

NEXUS-IBA, a non profit association of broadcasters and program producers, owns and operates IRRS-Shortwave, on Shortwave to Europe, N Africa and the Middle East. We especially welcome listeners' comments to all of our members' productions. Thank You. 73s, de Ron Norton (via Hans Johnson, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD)

** KOREA NORTH. 6398.73, P`yongyang Broadcasting Station, Kanggye, 1206-1220, Feb. 4, Korean, OM with "passionate" talk at tune-in followed by anthem-like choral music. Talks from 1210 to 1220, then gone. I stayed on frequency for several minutes but heard nothing else. Unsure if a break in programming or propagational. Poor/noisy signal (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** KOREA NORTH [non]. 6600, CLANDESTINE, V. of the People, 1142-1204, Feb. 4, Korean, Ballad at tune-in booming in, then barely audible talks at 1145-1155, more music the talks at 1200 continuing thru tune-out. Weak but audible with constant het. // 3912 inaudible due to amateur traffic (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** LATVIA. Radio Marabu transmits on shortwave 9290 kHz on the 8th of February 2004 from 1400 up to 1800 hours German time (1300 up to 1700 hours UT). Your host is DJ Donata with the Top 30 for the year 2003.

RADIO MARABU e.V. - Postfach 1166 - D 49187 Belm - Germany
Tel.: 05406/899484 -- Fax: 05406/899485
E-mail: marabu@r... [truncated] -- Homepage http://www.radio-marabu.de
Europe¥s radio station for alternative music
(Silvain Domen via DXA, via bclnews.it via WORLD OF RADIO 1219, DXLD)

** LIBERIA. Traditional Leaders Should Join Disarmament Campaign, Vice Chairman Urges --- The NEWS (Monrovia) February 5, 2004

...Meanwhile, speaking at the dedicatory program of a modern high school, hospital and a short wave radio station constructed by the Rock International Church in Dwazohn, Margibi County, the Vice Chairman lauded the Rock International Church for its contribution toward the social and educational development of Liberia...
http://allafrica.com/stories/200402050572.html
(via Jilly Dybka, DXLD) Huh? What SW station? (gh, DXLD)

** MADAGASCAR. 5010, Talata-Volondry, R. TV Malagasy, Feb 4 0343 - Male announcer in unknown language with fades. Signal level at S5. Definite African language. QRM from opts [?] on 5005 in usb. Noted signal dropped to S3 at Echo noted. ID tentative (Bob Montgomery, PA, Cumbre DX via DXLD) from RN site? I don`t think so. And Malagasy is more like a Polynesian language than African (gh)

** MEXICO. XEKTT UPDATE, AND RELATED INFORMATION

A high level telephone call between the FCC and the SCT (Mexico's FCC) reportedly took place on Tuesday of last week. Put simply, the SCT is said to have promised swift action in eliminating the interference that XEKTT (XEPE), 560 kHz, Tecate/Tijuana, is currently causing to U.S. stations. Meanwhile, more broadcasters are joining the list of companies concerned with the interference.

Concern for Mexico's planned operations on 780 and 920 kHz (XESS and XEDD respectively) in the vicinity of Tijuana continues to mount. A hard copy of the authorization for 780 kHz has surfaced and confirms that operation with 20 kw day and 10 kW night is in fact sanctioned by the SCT, with non-directional facilities both times and a quarter-wave tall broadcast tower. This confirms the power figures published in CGC #610 and establishes that we are dealing with more blowtorch situations (From the CGC Communicator via Dennis Gibson, CA, IRCA, Feb 3, via DXLD)

** OKLAHOMA. I had a brief conversations with a Chisholm Trail Broadcasting salesperson at a grocery remote in Enid a few days ago, and pointed out that their van and display promoted KNID, KXLS and KCRC, but no sign of KMMZ 1640! She said they had just got the go-ahead to start selling KMMZ, and that it is run out of Enid rather than OKC. Next time I go by the transmitter site, I must take another look for an STL dish aimed NNW, as the only one I saw in November was SSE toward OKC. She also said Hiram Champlin had `sold the big tower` of 96.9 to Citadel (Glenn Hauser, Enid, Feb 5, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** PERU. 4485.31, R. Frequencia VH, 2353-0033, Feb. 3, Spanish, Repetitive wind instrumental with talkover at tune-in, "canned' ID with echo effects at 0000, up-beat music and ballads beginning at 0004 with brief talkovers by OM on every song. ID mentioned in passing at 0017. Fair at tune-in with increasing amounts of static (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** PORTUGAL. I`ve been wanting to hear RDPI`s DX program (in Portuguese of course), but always managed to miss it when it was on UT Tuesdays. Now thanks to CÈlio Romais` tip, I was ready and waiting UT Thu Feb 5 at 0040 --- but the only frequency of the five scheduled, 13770, 13700, 11980, 11655 and 9715, that was audible was the last one and it was under WYFR in Spanish! Why in the world would any station broadcasting to North America go on a frequency occupied by a North American station? Yet it happens time and again. I checked again at 0047 to find that RDPI was in the clear, just as the show, ``DX Portugal``, I think, was ending, and into music. WYFR often closes at :45, as I should have remembered in order to hear a bit more of the DX program. Info below concerns before 0000 only (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** PORTUGAL. ˙ltimas informaÁıes sobre...
latest infos. on...
˙ltimas informaciones sobre...

A RDPi - R·dio Portugal, alterou hoje, 4 de Fevereiro, a sua frequÍncia de 13770 kHz 100 kW 261∫ destinada sÚmente ‡s emissıes especiais dirigidas ‡ Venezuela (zonas UIT 10, 11 e 12) 2000-2400 HUC, passando aquela a 15450 kHz. A frequÍncia de 13770 kHz 300 kW 226∫ mantÈm-se, porÈm, na emiss„o destinada ao Brasil (zonas 12, 13, 14 e 15) 0000-0300 HUC, de 3™-f™ a s·bado.

The RDPi changed today 4th Feb. its frequency of 13770 kHz 100 kW 261∫ used for the special broadcasts to Venezuela 2000-2400 UT, the new one being 15450 kHz. 13770 kHz 300 kW 226∫ is, however, kept for the Tues.-Sat. 0000-0300 broadcasts to Brazil.

La RDPi - Radio Portugal alterÛ hoy su frecuencia de 13770 kHz 100 kW 261∫ utilizada solamente para las emisiones especiales hacia Venezuela 2000-2400 HUC, asÌ que la nueva frecuencia es 15450 kHz. Se mantienen todavia los 13770 kHz 300 kW 226∫ hacia el Brasil 0000-0300 HUC, de martes a s·bado.

NB 1: a presente alteraÁ„o ficou a dever-se a problema tÈcnico e a impossibilidade de utilizar outro emissor de 100 kW em 13770 kHz / the current amendment was due to a technical problem and the impossbility of using another 100 kW unit for 13770 kHz / esta alteraciÛn es debida a un problema tÈcnico pero tambiÈn al hecho de resultar imposible utilizar un otro emisor de 100 kW para los 13770 kHz.

NB 2: programas para a AmÈrica do Norte, zonas UIT 6, 7 e 8 --|
programs to N. Amercia, ITU zones 6-8 ---------- |
programas hacia la AmÈrica del Norte, zonas UIT 6, 7 y 8 -----|

A frequÍncia de 15540 kHz 100 kW 294∫ destinada ‡s emissıes especiais 2™-f™ a 6™-f™ 1300-2400 HUC e ‡s emissıes regulares aos s·bados e domingos 1300-2100 (pode prolongar-se atÈ ‡s 2400) HUC sofrer· uma possÌvel alteraÁ„o, passando a utilizar-se trÍs freqs., a anunciar logo que possÌvel;

15540 kHz 100 kW 294∫ for the special Mon-Fri 1300 2400 UT broadcasts as well as those on Sat/Sun 1300-2100 (may extend until 2400) UTC may be changed into three different freqs. which will be announced as soon as possible;

La frecuencia de 15540 kHz 100 kW 294∫ destinada a las emisiones extras o especiales lunes-viernes 1300-2400 HUC y tambiÈn por los s·b. y domingos 1300-2100 (que se puede extender hasta las 2400) HUC podr· sufrir un cambio que se traducir· en la utilizaciÛn de trÈs frecuencias distintas que ser·n anunciadas t·n pronto que sean conocidas (Carlos GonÁalves, Lisboa, PORTUGAL, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** RUSSIA. The alleged SW transmissions of Radio Tsentr are definitely non-existent. Vladimir Tarbayev, station manager of Radio Tsentr, has meanwhile commented on the guzei.com website on the originally posted item and called it a "provocation". (Bernd Trutenau, Lithuania, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD) Ditto alleged MW 981

** RUSSIA. RUSSIA TO SPEND 42 MEGADOLLARS ON SWITCH TO DIGITAL BROADCASTING | Text of report by Russian news agency ITAR-TASS

Novosibirsk, 4 February: Russia's television and radio broadcasting equipment will be comprehensively modernized over the next two years. Outdated analogue stations will be replaced with digital ones. This

was said today at a news conference in Novosibirsk by the director-general of the federal enterprise Russian Television and Radiobroadcasting Network, Gennadiy Sklyar.

"A digital revolution is under way. It demands that we take quick decisions and we are leading in this area: the year 2005 will be the last year of modernization," Sklyar said.

"As a result, every television viewer will have access to hundreds of TV and radio programmes. Cable networks will simultaneously provide television, radio, Internet and telephone access," Sklyar said, explaining the advantages of the modernization.

This large-scale project to switch to digital equipment costs 42 million dollars. The implementation will start from the Russian Far East and central Russia. In Novosibirsk, Sklyar and the region's governor, Viktor Tolokonskiy, signed an agreement on the development of television and radio broadcasting networks. Source: ITAR-TASS news agency, Moscow, in Russian 0915 gmt 4 Feb 04 (via BBCM via DXLD)

** ST. HELENA. Re the opening for a CEO at St. Helena News Media Service, pay is over 10 kilopounds, deadline is 20 Feb, and it`s on page 16 of the 30 Jan issue, which on the Acrobat reader page indicator is 15. http://www.news.co.sh/SHH20040130p.pdf
(via Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** SAUDI ARABIA [and non]. The following article has been submitted to Clandestineradio.com / CRW and RNMW by Nick Grace, Washington DC. It will appear in CRW 152 (publ. date Feb 15, 2004). Please mention N. Grace and CRW 152 as sources when using this article.

Intersting for the the hobby: this article mentions CRW and TDP as well Nick Grace and Ludo Maes.

A BATTLE FOR EARS AND MINDS --- AS TECHNOLOGY GIVES NEW VOICE TO DISSENT, A SAUDI VIES TO BE HEARD --- By David Crawford, The Wall Street Journal February 4, 2004 page A14

London -- FOR MUCH of the Cold War, radio and television were powerful tools in the hands of governments trying to influence citizens in other countries. Now, media dissent is shifting to private citizens like Abdulaziz Alkhamis.

The 41-year-old head of the London-based Saudi Center for Human Rights has been engaged in a battle of wits against Saudi Arabian authorities who have sought to get his satellite-based radio and television stations off the air. He has scored notable victories -- such as radio

broadcasts that last year led to the first demonstrations for human rights in the Saudi capital of Riyadh -- but also defeats, including a run-in with a Saudi bureaucrat who finagled transmission details out of one of his subcontractors.

The broadcasts and countermeasures are part of a wider battle for the future of what was long seen as the most stable and pro-American government in the Arab world. Now, years of economic and political stagnation have left Saudi Arabia a brittle place -- one where Mr. Alkhamis's shoestring radio operation was able to send hundreds into the streets and trigger an aggressive effort to run him off the airwaves.

It also highlights the power of new technologies to affect governments thousands of kilometers away. Technologies once too expensive for private lobbying groups are now affordable -- costs for round-the-clock satellite radio broadcasts have fallen sharply over the past few years to $5,000 (4,000 euros) a month. The result: an explosion of increasingly sophisticated dissent being beamed into living rooms around the world.

Some stations have large potential audiences; Radio Voice of Iran broadcasts information critical of Tehran's Islamic government. Many stations seek to rally minority populations: The Voice of Oromo Liberation broadcasts to Ethiopia, seeking independence for the Oromo people in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Alkhamis wants democracy and more human rights in Saudi Arabia. A journalist in Riyadh who was sent to London to edit a Saudi newsmagazine owned by a senior member of the royal family, Mr. Alkhamis discovered the power of satellite broadcasting after hosting a television show on a popular Arab network. Mr. Alkhamis and the show parted ways after just 10 months -- he says he was asked to leave; a programming director says Mr. Alkhamis chose to leave -- but Mr. Alkhamis is still a minicelebrity on the streets of London's Arab community, where people stop him to shake his hand.

Mr. Alkhamis realized, however, that his secular beliefs weren't mainstream enough for most Saudis. So in 2002 he approached Saad Al Fagih, a dissident who heads the Movement for Islamic Reform in Arabia, to host a satellite radio show. Mr. Fagih quickly agreed, and they named it Islah, or Reform, Radio.

To handle the technical details, Mr. Alkhamis hired Ludo Maes, a Belgian short-wave specialist. Mr. Maes won't reveal the location of the short-wave transmitters, but Nick Grace of Clandestine Radio Watch, a group of radio buffs who publish a newsletter and run a Web site, says Reform Radio's transmitters were located in Lithuania -- a

typical arrangement that takes advantage of transmitters left over from the Cold War.

Mr. Maes also arranged for Reform Radio to be broadcast by satellite via a Deutsche Telekom uplink near Frankfurt. The satellite, called Hotbird, is owned by Eutelsat SA, a French company that leases broadcast bandwidth to brokers such as Deutsche Telekom. Mr. Alkhamis says satellite broadcasting was important because 80% of Saudi households own a satellite dish. "The government can't stop people from turning on their TV," he says. Reform Radio began broadcasting via satellite and short wave in December 2002. Listeners were encouraged to speak out against corruption and for a moderate Islamic government in Saudi Arabia.

Trouble, though, soon set in. After four days of clear short-wave broadcasts, the station was hit by jamming -- signals emitted by a powerful opposing transmitter -- greatly diminishing the reception quality.

Saudi Arabia won't say whether it is trying to block Mr. Alkhamis's stations, and officials declined to comment for this article. But Mr. Grace of Clandestine Radio Watch says members of his group tracked the jamming to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Mr. Maes in June received a letter from a lawyer representing the Saudi Embassy in Belgium threatening legal action "to halt the broadcasts." The letter accused Mr. Maes's company of inciting terrorism through the broadcasting of propaganda. Mr. Maes's lawyer responded by saying the broadcasts were legal and would continue. The Saudi Embassy and its lawyer declined to comment.

Mr. Maes was perplexed by the letter. It contained detailed technical knowledge of Reform's broadcasts. Then he remembered a meeting he had earlier last year at a broadcasters' conference in South Africa. A man from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Information had made friends with him and over several bottles of wine, Mr. Maes now realizes he had told his new friend all the technical details about Reform's radio broadcasts. Says Mr. Maes, "I guess I told him too much."

Without short wave, Reform Radio has relied on its satellite broadcasts. These are harder to jam, but because most Saudis get satellite broadcasts only on their television sets, Reform Radio had a problem reaching a wide audience. When people flip through the channels in search of a program, the radio channel shows nothing but a blank screen, so few people bother to stop and listen.

So Messrs. Alkhamis and Fagih decided to set up a satellite television station. Unlike with radio, television broadcasting requires a license

in most countries. In Croatia, however, Mr. Alkhamis was advised that he didn't need a license, and a television uplink was arranged in July.

For a week, Reform Television was on the air. Mr. Fagih, liberal by Saudi standards but still orthodox on most religious issues, prohibited music for moral reasons. Mr. Alkhamis had no budget for videos. Instead, they broadcast a picture of the Reform logo, along with text information scrolling across the screen. The audio was from the radio broadcast.

Then the Croatian partner suddenly wanted a license. Reform Television was off the air again. But the station's brief existence was a turning point -- the program, low-budget as it was, brought Reform Radio to the attention of many Saudis.

That became important in the weeks leading up to Oct. 12, when a government- backed conference began in Riyadh to discuss human-rights violations in other countries. Reform Radio called on Saudis to demonstrate peacefully for human rights at home. On Oct. 14, hundreds of young men in Saudi robes unfurled banners calling for human rights -- the first demonstration for human rights in the Saudi capital. Nearly 200 were arrested.

A week later, the phone rang at the Usingen Earth Station near Frankfurt, where T-Systems, a Deutsche Telekom subsidiary, controls and monitors television, radio and data beamed to satellites. On the line was an anonymous caller. "Stop broadcasting Reform Radio or we will jam you," he said, according to someone involved in the incident. About the same time, a powerful jamming beam turned the video monitor in the office to static.

The jamming affected five TV programs broadcast via the same transponder, including several small commercial channels. When Telekom stopped broadcasting Reform briefly, the jamming was stopped. A new anonymous phone call would then warn Deutsche Telekom not to resume broadcasting. On Oct. 25, Deutsche Telekom canceled its contract with Reform Radio. Representatives for Eutelsat and Deutsche Telekom declined to comment on the incident.

In December, backed by new funding, Reform Television returned to the airwaves with a strategy designed to overcome jamming. Reform Television is now by itself on a satellite transponder, meaning jamming doesn't block other broadcasters' signals. Since late December, the broadcast has been jammed only for brief intervals -- and flashes back on viewers' screens as soon as the jamming ends (via Martin Schoech, CRW, Feb 4 via DXLD)

Comment:

The article suggests that "Reform Radio" [also known as Radio Sawt Al-Islah] has been broadcast via transmitters [sic] in Lithuania. Asked for a comment, the operator of the Lithuanian SW transmitting centre in Sitkunai has ensured that this information is not correct, this station was never broadcast from Lithuanian soil. The centre employs a single 100 kW SW transmitter and does not have an antenna that covers the Middle East. This denial was confirmed also by other, independent sources.

Sawt Al-Islah has always been attributed to Norwegian transmitters, and for the B03 season, TDP had registered in advance with the HFCC the two frequencies 12130 and 15705 for Sawt Al-Islah from Kvits¯y-NOR with 250 kW; these registration details were openly available to the Saudi Arabian participants at the HFCC conference and are also in the public version of the HFCC operational schedule.

As for the fate of Radio Sawt Al-Islah: the station continues to be carried on the TELSTAR 12 satellite and is also available live on the Internet. Details can be found on this website:
http://www.lyngsat.com/liveradio/United-Kingdom.shtml
(Bernd Trutenau, Lithuania, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

I assume the author, David Crawford, dateline London, is not the same David E. Crawford, DXer in Florida? (gh, DXLD)

Any comments on how one could tell that the short wave jamming was coming from Jeddah? (Hans Johnson, Cumbre DX via DXLD)

This is theoretically possible with the help of direction finding equipment at several professional monitoring stations.

What is occasionally misunderstood in this connection is the phenomenon "satellite jamming". Experienced users of digital satellite equipment (both Al Islah TV and Sawt Al-Islah are transmitted in digital format) know that whenever the reception is not optimal, the digital picture or audio begins to get "scrambled", "freezes" or completely disappears. This seems sometimes to be misinterpreted as being a result of "jamming", while in reality this is a signal quality problem with the down- or uplink. If I remember correctly, the audio of Sawt Al-Islah was known for notorious "silent periods" during the SW transmissions - this could have been the result of such signal problems, or of problems with an Internet feed.

Sawt Al-Islah has always been attributed to Norwegian transmitters, and for the B03 season, TDP actually registered Sawt Al-Islah as a separate radio station with the HFCC, for two frequencies from

Kvits¯y-NOR with 250kW: 12130 and 15705. These are still in the public version of the HFCC operational schedule (broadcaster code ALI). 73s, (Bernd Trutenau, Cumbre DX via DXLD)

** SOMALIA. 6980U, R. Galkayo, 1700 Feb 4, an absolute mess. OK on the music, but their mike had a problem, so when they spoke one mostly heard a loud hum and not much of what they were saying. Mostly in Somali but did catch a woman saying "You are listening to . . " in English at 1709. Via Javoradio Europe (Hans Johnson, Naples, FL, Cumbre DX via DXLD)

** SOMALIA [non]. SOUTH AFRICA, 17565, R. Mustaqbul. Thanks tips that this is Mon/Tue/Thu only. 1207 Tue Feb 3 with man and kids talking. Sounded like Somali to me. Pretty good signal via Javoradio Europe. 1220 local music, not sure what the lyrics were, perhaps educational. ID as simply Mustaqbul at 1228 and gave schedule and mentioned EDC and USAID. I was surprised when same announcement was given in English: "You have been listening to Mustaqbul. . . The programs were designed by EDC. . . funding was provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development." One song followed, open carrier, and off (Hans Johnson, Naples, FL, Cumbre DX via DXLD) a.k.a. Mustaqbal for searching (gh)

** SOUTH ORKNEY ISLANDS. Henry is QRV as AY1ZA and has been active on 15 meters around 1800z. He is also active on 40 meters around 0500z. QSL via LU4DXU (ARRL DX News Feb 5 via Dave Raycroft, ODXA via DXLD)

** SUDAN [non]. Re 4-013, the extra frequency for Sudan Radio Service, 1500-1700, 15290, heard only by the Observers in Bulgaria --- I believe I have found the explanation, assuming 15530 is via Woofferton as reported: A leapfrog mixing product with another Woofferton transmitter halfway between, on 15410, as in HFCC:
15410 1400 1700 40 WOF 300 105 1234567 261003 270304 D G IBB IBB
(Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** SURINAME. Re: Is it still being heard? (gh, DXLD)

I logged what I believed was R. Apintie (playing indigenous music) at 4990.0 on 12.22.03 at 0553Z. It seemed to have been a very good evening and early morning, with many new catches in the prior five or six hours ranging from Pakistan to the best I had ever heard R. Cima (Santo Domingo, Dom. Rep): I had logged it playing Spanish music at 0727, and noted "superb". A great propagation experience and one of the best nights of the winter. Best, (Steve Waldee - retired b'cast engineer, San JosÈ, CA, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Fine, but that was a sesquimonth ago (gh, DXLD)

** U K. BBC FACING ITS TOUGHEST CRISIS YET --- Mark Rice-Oxley

Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor 02/05/2004

(LONDON) It was a bruising clash between the British state and its own broadcaster. The country was immersed in crisis, protesters were on the streets, and the airwaves were thick with reports critical of the government. Ministers were apoplectic at the coverage, but the British Broadcasting Corporation dug in its heels. The resultant stand-off threatened the BBC's very survival. . .
http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0205/p01s04-woeu.html
(via Jim Moats, DXLD)

** U K [and non]. LESSONS FROM A BBC BLUNDER
Commentary from the February 04, 2004 edition By John Hughes

SALT LAKE CITY --- The world of journalism has just suffered another one of those ethical train crashes that from time to time cause dismay, anguish, and, one hopes, self-examination. Although it happened across the Atlantic in Britain, there are lessons to be pondered by US press, politicians, and public. . .
http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0204/p08s04-cojh.html
ï John Hughes, a former editor of the Monitor, was director of the Voice of America in the Reagan administration (Christian Science Monitor via Larry Nebron, DXLD)

** U S A. A DEMOCRAT [sic] GETS IT

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, 02/05/04. General Wesley Clark, a candidate running to be the Democratic Presidential nominee, criticized the Bush Administration for slashing the budget for the Voice of America broadcasts to Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. [but see also COSTA RICA non]

DATELINE: WASHINGTON, 02/05/04. As the Union exposed last week, the BBG was indeed intent on attacking the English Broadcasts at the Voice of America. The first round of cuts will happen in October and will reduce the Broadcasts from 19 hours a day to 14 hours a day. The larger question is how many broadcasters and journalists they are planning on throwing out of work. They don't save much money by reducing broadcast hours. They reduce costs by throwing people out of work. They know how many they plan to throw out of work, they just are not sharing that information.

SENATOR DURBIN BLASTS CUTS IN FUNDING FOR VOA

AFGE Local 1812 salutes Senator Richard Durbin of Illinois who stated in regard to the passing of the 2004 Budget: "One of the major disappointments was the deletion of funding in the Commerce-Justice-

State-Judiciary appropriations for the Voice of America...". He went on to say: "The Senate bill included this funding, as did the Senate version of the authorization bill: $9 million for broadcasts to Estonia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, and Moldova. Unfortunately, this bill will cut off those broadcasts, and that is not the right thing to do."

AFGE Local 1812 asks where Representative Wolf stood on this issue? Many of his constituents will be devastated by this bad decision (AFGE Local 1812 website Feb 5 via DXLD)

** U S A [non?]. Re the report of WWCR being heard well on 9985 in Western Australia --- I am now having my doubts, since KHBN Palau has already been using the frequency at the same time; any IDs caught? Language? (Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. Updates for DX Programs. Based on a couple weeks' checking:

UT Saturday 0730-0800 WHRI DXING WITH CUMBRE: Even though their own announced-on-air-in-January schedule listed this time as airing DXw/C on both 5745 and 7315, and it's been in the list as 5745 only, on both 1/24/04 and 1/31/04 there's been a religious program instead on 5745, and the gospel music "Turn Your Radio On" program on 7315. So I think it's safe to drop this one off the list. Another mythical DXw/C entry from them, I guess... :-) I hope to NOT be awake at 1:30 in the morning to check this one again... :-)

UT Monday 0305: The re-airing of "Cyberline" on WWCR at this time ends at 0500 UT, not 0600, sadly. It seems you get the last two hours of the whole three-hour show live on Saturday nights, and a recorded airing of the first two hours on Sunday night. Rather odd and annoying; I'd like to hear the whole three hours on Sunday, myself, instead of that "Rock The Universe" that comes on at 0500 Monday. Regards, and thanks for all the work in maintaining the list!
73, (Will Martin, MO, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. Right now I can clearly hear WWV's 15 MHz outlet on 15 MHz at about S9+20dB. It is also clearly audible at 15026 and 14974 kHz which is +/- 26 kHz. This is NOT receiver related as it's on more than one receiver. It looks like they've got a 26 kHz spur. 73 from the "Beaconeers Lair". (Phil, KO6BB, DX begins at the noise floor! Merced, Central California, Feb 3 at 2300 UT? swl at qth.net via DXLD)

The 26 kHz spurs are also readable on 15 MHz in Bellevue, WA (Joe k7mks, 2315 UT, ibid.)

Thanks to a tip yesterday from Phil Atchley, listening to spurs from WWV 15000 on 14974 and 15026 at 1900. Yesterday I was able to also

detect another spur up at 15052; 14948 was blocked here by a ute
(Steve Lare, Holland, MI, Feb. 4, 2004, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. SHORTWAVE RADIO: THE BEST KEPT SECRET OF EVANGELISM

Did you know that it is possible for you to reach the entire world with your message? Are you aware that you can reliably communicate to the entire world from a single radio station that is equipped with multiple antennas that target the entire globe and multiple transmitters? If you live in the United States, this is a secret that has been held by interest groups for nearly fifty years. This secret is broadcasting on international world-band shortwave radio.

Why has this secret been so jealously guarded by special interest groups, notably AM stations, their advertising agencies, and their broadcasting organizations? The reason is simple: world-band shortwave radio allows your broadcast from one station, with the correct antennas, and multiple transmitters, to the reach the entire globe reliably. AM radio cannot hope to compete with performance like that; as a result, AM radio stations do their best to use their collective might to behind the scenes, prevent the American people from knowing about international shortwave radio. Advertising agencies realize that there is little profit for them in shortwave broadcasting. On AM radio, when an advertising agency sells a broadcast time package for 20-40 stations to cover a single state, they may make tens of thousands of dollars in commissions. However, selling a broadcast time package that covers the entire world on a shortwave station with multiple antennas and multiple transmitters may only generate a few dollars in commissions. As a result, there is no incentive at all for advertising agencies to tell their clients about shortwave radio. This situation has been the norm in America since after World War II.

The bottom line is that AM broadcasting cannot compete with a multi-transmitter, multi-antenna shortwave broadcast station in audience numbers and coverage. As a result, to protect their interests, supporters of AM broadcasting try to keep international world-band shortwave radio the best kept secret of evangelism. Unfortunately for them, the secret is rapidly becoming more and more well known in America as more and more pastors and evangelists find out about shortwave radio. Read on to discover the history of shortwave broadcasting in America and the world, and the current trends that are causing Americans to become aware of and listen to international shortwave radio in record numbers. . .
http://www.wwrb.org/whatisshortwave.htm
(Dave Frantz, WWRB website via DXLD)

** U S A. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH EYES CUTS --- OVERHAUL OF MONITOR, LAYOFFS ARE DISCUSSED By Donovan Slack, Globe Correspondent, 2/5/2004

Officials of the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston told employees yesterday that ailing finances are forcing them to restructure church operations, including laying off top-level managers, possibly ceasing production of some publications, moving others overseas, and overhauling operations at the Christian Science Monitor.

"Overall contributions to the Mother Church have not kept pace with the demand," church treasurer Walter D. Jones said in a speech to employees at the church's headquarters on Huntington Avenue and broadcast to others over the Internet. "We must bring expenses in line."

The church plans to review the operations of the printed edition of the Christian Science Monitor newspaper and may begin charging for subscriptions to the online version. . .
http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2004/02/05/christian_science_church_eyes_cuts/

Will this affect the operation of WSHB? (Jim Moats, OH, DX LISTENING DIGEST) No mention of WSHB, or any broadcasting, in the article (gh)

** U S A. HOLLY column Wednesday, February 04, 2004 By HOLLY

Mayor Quinn gave a grand tour of radio station WSNJ in Bridgeton Tuesday morning at 1 o'clock. For two reasons:
A. He owns the station.
B. Greg Hennis and Rich Arsenault were doing all the work.
--
Hennis and Arsenault were the stars of the moment. Some people thought it would take a couple of days before simulcasting would begin on 1440 AM. Are you kidding?

Arsenault and Hennis showed up at WSNJ at 11 p.m. and they were simulcasting by 2 a.m.
--
Arsenault is scary. He was a high school dropout because he was bored. Now he has a masters. He builds rocket ships for fun. He has a son who will have a college degree at age 17 and never spent a day in school in his life.

He was in the station 10 minutes when he discovered the output was only 500 watts, instead of the full 1,000. Immediately, he doubled the signal. He's the kind of guy you have work on a mission to Mars.

He and "Hurricane'' worked non-stop in the wee hours of Tuesday morning and had the new station identification going out over the

airwaves by 2 a.m. Seconds later, they were hooked up to Channel 2.
--
Arsenault and Hennis, they're both high energy and they feed off each other, said Quinn.
--
The station itself is a time warp. It's exactly as it was 30, 40, 50 years ago. It's too bad it can't remain that way. Not a computer in the place.

Although not used anymore, the old UPI news ticker is still in the newsroom. Everything is done by hand -- the log, the billing, etc.

It was like walking on hallowed ground, not unlike what it must be like opening an Egyptian pyramid. And it worked.
--
As much as the turning off of the AM signal Tuesday at 6:31 p.m. was like a funeral to the Bold family, the purchase by Quinn of the AM station means that it will remain the same.

Quinn made an initial bid of $500,000 for the AM station and then upped it by $50,000.

Told by the new owners that there was another bid matching his, Quinn called their bluff and said, "Then sell it to them.''
--
They were trying to up the price, said Quinn Tuesday morning. How could there be an exact same bid?
--
We Get E-mails: "With deep sadness, we regret to report the passing of a dear friend, WSNJ F.M. Local Radio.

"WSNJ was born in Bridgeton, New Jersey in 1946, the oldest child of N.J. and FM Local Radio, whose maiden name was AM Radio.

"WSNJ enjoyed excellent health until his death. A veteran of many wars, which helped to secure America's freedom, WSNJ was much loved by thousands of loyal friends throughout the Delaware Valley, who now mourn his untimely passing. WSNJ was much involved in church, social and community affairs, and was influential in bringing prosperity to the region.

"In spite of WSNJ's popularity and interest in political affairs, he consistently refused to get involved in party politics and never yielded to the temptation of acruing wealth or misusing his influence. Until the bitter end, WSNJ lived frugally and did not even own a computer.

"This evening, February 2, 2004 at 6:30 PM, WSNJ FM Local Radio

breathed his last breath of airwaves. He was the latest tragic victim of a ruthless band, which in recent years has been systematically bringing members of the Local Radio family under it's control by offering large sums of money that few can resist. For many years the band was held in check by lawmakers, but more recently, the latter relaxed restrictions, allowing them to run roughshod over our nation, destroying the last remnants of democratic freedom as expressed by the local Radio family.

"An obituary, printed in the New York Times reports that WSNJ was the 66th victim of this band, but other bands have been even more successful in subjecting members of the Local Radio family.

"A spokesman at the deathbed of WSNJ F.M Local Radio said late this afternoon, "WSNJ has been a fighter and will continue to be a fighter to the end." The end came at exactly 6:30 P.M. today.

"The few survivors of the Local Radio family encourage their many friends to offer prayers in lieu of flowers and condolences.''
-- Ralph Harvey Copyright 2004 Bridgeton News. Used with permission.
(via Mike Cooper, DXLD)

** U S A. When KCBS was first listed on Ibiquity's page as being an IBOC station, months ago, I sent them an email inquiring if they were using the transmission medium at that time, since I found no trace of any artifact that would indicate it. Their CE wrote back to say that they weren't ready. For a few weeks after seeing it mentioned in DXLD I kept forgetting to tune in. Finally yesterday, before pattern change time, I did: no trace of the "buzz saw" that people are describing. This morning I checked again: ditto. 730 and 750 were in the clear, except for sibilance splatter from KCBS. I assume this means it is not on; but could it be that different listeners will have different perceptions of this alleged problem? I tried both cheap and better radios but not yet the R-75, trying to get the impression that "civilians" would have --- so far, none of the squinchy audio nor sideband interference claimed. Will keep trying (Steve Waldee, San JosÈ CA, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A [and non]. The Master List of Part 15 Radio Stations of North America

Part 15 means unlicensed, but legal transmitters below a certain very low power limit. This is a huge page in frequency order, including longwave lowfers, mediumwave medfers around 510 and broadcasters, shortwave hifers in the 13 MHz band, one 49 MHz station, and FM broadcasters. As extensive as it is, it doesn`t mention the 1630 MD and 1650 IL stations recently in DXLD, nor the 1620 AZ KFHX. BTW, searching the page for OK only turned up a few lowfers, not a single

broadcast station --- I knew there was something boring about this state... http://home.att.net/~weatheradio/part15.htm
(Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. WSWK-1690 testing --- Hi guys! My first post after lurking in the background enjoying everyone's input for a long time!

WSWK-1690 Avondale Estates, GA heard on this afternoon with equipment tests 1:12-2:09 pm [EST = UT -5] playing country music and ID's about every ten minutes or so. Booming in strongly here in the Lawrenceville (NE suburbs) area. Must have started around noon because prior to that I had WRLL coming in nicely. WSWK is still on as of this writing. It was nice to get a new daytime logging! (Already have them veried when in Adel). Good luck...73, (Karl, Feb 5, IRCA via DXLD)

WSWK 1690 kHz testing --- Glen[n], WSWK, Avondale Estates (Atlanta), GA, was testing again during the local evening of 5 February on 1690 kHz. The signal level seemed much lower than previous tests carried out a few weeks ago during the evening, so it was probably close to their night time power. The testing consisted of country/honky tonk music and an ID every few minutes announcing their equipment tests. A sample of the ID is available here...
http://homepage.mac.com/wswk/test_id.mp3   (mp3 format)
http://homepage.mac.com/wswk/test_id.wma   (Windows Media format)
as monitored from my location in Duluth, GA (a northwest Atlanta suburb). (Harry Smith, UT Feb 6, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. NOAA watch yer heads reports --- At work today (on the old weather radio on my desk, during the usual Wednesday late-morning weekly test), I noted a segment referencing that WXK83A Sebring, FL (Highlands County) on 162.500 and KWN38 Morriston, FL (Levy County) are supposedly activating special alerts during "hazardous launches" by military aircraft. Missed the entire segment, but this is presumably in reference to the Ocala National Forest-area and Avon Park Bombing Ranges, used for practice US sortie runs (Terry L Krueger, Clearwater, Florida, Feb 4, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. A SHARP LEFT TURN ON DIAL --- BOMBASTIC AM HOST 'BIG EDDIE' SCHULTZ BLASTS AWAY AT BUSH AS THE LEADING VOICE IN LIBERALS' NASCENT NATIONAL RADIO COUNTEROFFENSIVE.
By Stephanie Simon, Times Staff Writer, February 5, 2004
From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 5, 2004, taken from latimes.com

FARGO, N.D. --- It may well have been the bologna sandwich that spun Big Eddie "the Redhead" Schultz down the path of self-enlightenment, transforming him from a bull-neck, bombastic conservative into a bull-neck, bombastic liberal just itching to grab his talk radio mike and give Rush Limbaugh hell.

But that story will have to wait.

"The Ed Schultz Show" is about to air.

Schultz swings into his seat as his producer counts down 10 seconds until the live broadcast opens. He clamps on his headphones as the taped introduction rolls: "From high above the North American continent, democracy has a new voice. Powerful. Passionate. Persistent."

Schultz lets out an enormous yawn, then swings the microphone toward him. He's on. "Lock and load, baby," he booms. "If it's got mad cow, I love beef so much I'll still eat it."

He's still chortling at his own quip as he introduces his first guest: conservative commentator Pat Buchanan.

For this, Democratic politicians helped solicit $1.8 million from private donors, enough cash to keep the brand-new "Ed Schultz Show" on the air for at least two years. It's not a whim. It's a mission. Democrats are counting on Schultz --- a onetime sportscaster who used to mock the homeless on the air --- to anchor the AM dial nationwide as the provocative new voice of the left.

Well, maybe not exactly the left. Schultz, 49, has voted for only one Democrat that he can recall, a local congressman. He's opposed to abortion in all circumstances. He considers Buchanan a friend. Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, he says, gives him "the willies."

He's prone to say things like: "I'd like to see the president get all the illegals out of the country, so we can start all over again." And yet, thanks to that bologna sandwich, Schultz considers himself "a gun-toting, meat-eating leftie."

"This is the most selfish generation in the history of the country!" he shouted into his mike when a caller asked him about the federal deficit. His eyes were closed, his face was red and his hands slashed at the air. The people lining the Bush campaign's pockets are running this country. The little guys don't have a say anymore."

Then Big Eddie looked up and winked. When he gets in a good one, he likes everyone to notice. "Hey," he'll call over to his producer at a commercial break, "that was a pretty good pip on Bush, wasn't it?"

Though his irreverent, raucous style sounds familiar, Schultz's assaults on the Bush administration sharply contrast with the conservative commentary that dominates the radio airwaves. While

Limbaugh was calling former Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill "childish" for criticizing President Bush in a new book, Schultz was gleefully trumpeting O'Neill's harshest comments. While Limbaugh was mocking O'Neill as deaf and blind to reality --- "the Helen Keller of the Cabinet" --- Schultz was dredging out clips of the president praising his treasury secretary as a "straight shooter."

"By God, Ed, you're doing good stuff, trying to get the truth out," liberal Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa told him on the air.

Limbaugh's comments, of course, commanded a much larger audience. He draws 15 million listeners a week, on 600 stations nationwide.

Schultz's show, which premiered Jan. 5, currently airs on just a dozen stations, mostly in small towns like Steamboat Springs, Colo., Brownwood, Texas, and Needles, Calif. Its biggest market is Oklahoma City [where?? No affiliate list found on website]. It's also broadcast live on XM satellite radio and online, though the server crashes often, at http://www.bigeddieradio.com

Ratings won't be available for several months. Still, Schultz's backers say they're confident his show will take off. "Democracy is best served," said Sen. Byron L. Dorgan, a North Dakota Democrat, "by having many voices on the air."

Getting those voices on the air has long been a Democratic Party goal.

Former Vice President Al Gore is leading an effort to develop a left-leaning cable TV channel. Another group is raising funds to buy radio stations in big cities to air liberal-friendly programming, including a show by comedian and bestselling author Al Franken.

"The Ed Schultz Show" has been promoted by a third coalition, Democracy Radio. Executive Director Tom Athans surveyed national talk radio last year and found that more than 2,000 stations broadcast conservative shows, while fewer than 80 aired liberal programs.

What's more, only a handful of the liberal hosts drew good ratings. At the top of that very small pack was Schultz.

A much-loved (and much-hated) sportscaster famed for his raucous play-by-play of North Dakota college football, Schultz grew up in Virginia, but moved to the Midwest to study --- and play quarterback --- at Minnesota State University in Moorhead. His passing skills earned him tryouts with the Oakland Raiders and New York Jets. When he didn't make the cut, he switched to reporting games from the sideline. He still has a football player's brawny build, though his red hair is thinning.

After two decades of sports reporting, Schultz launched a 2Ω-hour regional talk show in 1996.

The show, which he continues to host, blends interviews with local officials and sharp-edged banter with callers, spiced up with Big Eddie's rants about national affairs. He might report on a local school board meeting, break for the latest on pork belly futures, then swerve into acid commentary on the presidential primaries. The broadcast area reaches into South Dakota and Minnesota; on any given morning, nearly 30% of radio listeners in the region are tuned in to his show.

For years, Schultz's patter on the regional show was conservative. He scoffed at the homeless for complaining about the cold. "How about getting a job?" he'd ask. He sneered at the three Democrats who represent him in Congress, nicknaming them the Three Stooges.

"I lined up with the Republicans because they were antitax, and I wanted to make a lot of money," Schultz said. About two years ago, listeners began to hear a softer tone.

Schultz had once derided farmers for relying on government subsidies. Now he was pounding Bush for not offering extra aid during a drought. He was calling for universal health insurance. And more services for homeless veterans.

Some dismayed fans suspected a cynical motive. "My own opinion is, he knew he would never go national if he stayed on the right or in the middle. I truly believe he moved to the left because he thought that's where his career would get the biggest boost," said Ron Gilmore, 42, who runs a cleaning business in Fargo. "You don't change your politics overnight like he did without a goal in mind."

Schultz insists his transformation was genuine. It all started, he says, with the bologna sandwich. In 1998, Schultz met Wendy Noack, a psychiatric nurse, at a party. She agreed to a lunch date but told him they'd have to meet at the Salvation Army cafeteria next to the homeless shelter where she worked.

"You should have seen his face as he was moving along the line with his tray, getting his bologna sandwich and his cup of Campbell's soup. He was appalled," said Wendy, now his wife.

One of the homeless men eating there recognized Schultz from his TV sportscasts and called him over. Schultz had always written off the homeless as lazy. But as he talked to the man, he says, he started to realize that was too simplistic. On future dates --- over better food

--- he and Wendy talked about the men at the shelter. Hearing their stories, he regretted dismissing them all as bums.

Those conversations started him thinking. But Schultz's political outlook did not swing fully around until 2001, when he took his regional show on the road. In their 38-foot Winnebago, Schultz traveled North Dakota with Wendy, broadcasting from small towns and ranches.

For the first time, he sat down to talk with farmers, with teachers, with mothers who couldn't afford to take their kids to the doctor.

"I saw suffering," he said. And he aired it, opening his mike to ordinary people and their stories of struggle. The more he listened, he said, the more he came to believe that Democrats were doing more for "the little guy."

Schultz knows his critics view him as an opportunist. "I just ask 'em, 'Do you want me to go back to the other side?' " he said. "Isn't it great, though," he added, serious now, "that people can change?"

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York agrees. Though his views may not line up with hers on every issue, the former first lady considers Schultz a personal friend --- and a friend of the Democratic Party --- because he takes on the Bush White House with gusto. His conservative background gives her no pause.

"I believe in redemption," said Clinton, who twice this month has made time for Schultz to interview her on air. Clinton met Schultz last spring, when Democracy Radio's Athans brought the talk-show host to Washington to confer with liberal lawmakers. The politicians did not contribute funds. But Sen. Mary Landrieu of Louisiana hosted a party to introduce Schultz to potential donors. Other politicians pledged to go on air with him often.

They delivered, too: In the national show's first few days, Schultz interviewed Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota, Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California and a dozen other top politicians. ("Remember me?" he asked Feinstein minutes before she went on the air. "I'm the fat redhead you met at the Senate caucus.")

Though Schultz has proved he can land interviews with big-name Democrats, skeptics wonder whether listeners want to hear them.

The talk-radio audience is dominated by white men 35 to 54. Talkers magazine, a trade journal, estimates that more than a third are conservative and only one in 10 is liberal, with the rest falling somewhere in the middle.

Conservative hosts say their fans turn to talk radio for views they can't find in the rest of the media. "Network TV and the New York Times, Washington Post, L.A. Times axis is totally dominated by the left," said G. Gordon Liddy, whose talk show airs on 178 stations.

"Now the left, never satisfied with 9/10ths of the pie, has gotten its knickers in a twist about talk radio. It's a free country. They're certainly welcome to try," Liddy said. "But I'm inclined to think ? listeners will say, 'Look, we can get all that stuff already.' "

Many station managers apparently agree. Nearly all the top national hosts are conservative: Limbaugh, Liddy, Sean Hannity, Michael Savage, Laura Ingraham and others. Programmers are reluctant to tamper with that formula.

Even KFGO, the AM station out of Fargo that broadcasts Schultz's regional show, has not picked up the national program.

KTOX in Needles did take the risk. Station manager David Hayes bumped Dr. Laura Schlessinger, who's rated third in the nation, to run Schultz live. He's received close to 60 calls, he said, and they're running 2 to 1 in favor of Schultz.

"I really like the guy," said Bob Weyand, 50, who owns a towing service in Needles and tunes in often. "A lot of hosts won't listen to the other view?. But Ed doesn't tell you to shut up. He seems really down to earth."

Schultz plays up that man-of-the-people persona, calling himself the voice of the "working stiff." He continues to do the regional show in the morning from the KFGO studios on the snow-swept edge of Fargo, across from Bottle Barn Liquor, Big Top Bingo and a hearing aid store. Then his wife, who has left nursing to work as his producer, grabs some sandwiches and they eat in the office, zipping through e-mail and lining up interviews for the national show.

Schultz preps by watching TV news and scanning bullet-point summaries of articles. He's not big on context. And sometimes, he's flat-out wrong, as when he suggests that the president wants to legalize undocumented workers so they'll vote for him in 2004. Even if Bush's plan became law, the beneficiaries would not be eligible to vote for years.

"The average commercial radio listener in America is not looking for lofty, intellectual subjects," Schultz said. "This isn't brain surgery. It's about striking the passion of the people."

At the same time, Schultz makes clear that his goal is to win ratings, not woo converts to the liberal cause. He wants listeners to tune in because they enjoy his commentary and laugh along with his braying "heh heh heh heh!" If he convinces them that he's right, great. But his main motivation for doing the show, he said, is "to be successful, to go as far in my career as I can."

Later, he lets himself daydream about taking the Winnebago on the road for his national show, inviting fans in state after state to the mike. "Do you know how cool it's going to be when we get on a bunch of stations and we can go do the show from a small town in Middle America?" he said. "People are going to think, 'This guy really cares.' "

Big Eddie grinned. "And I do."

(LA Times via Matt Francis, Washington, DC, DXLD)

** U S A. VOLUNTEERS DONATE VOICES TO READ FOR VISUALLY DISABLED By DUANE M. BAILLIO/Sun Staff Writer Saturday, January 31, 2004 11:14 AM

CKRE volunteer John Swift, left, and Executive Director Margaret Chase, center, look over the next news article to read while Diane Wachs reads an article from a newspaper over the air at the radio station's studio on the University of Kentucky campus. The closed-circuit radio station broadcasts six hours of locally produced programming every weekday from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Weekend hours are slightly shorter. (Sun photo by Duane M. Baillio)

LEXINGTON - Loss of vision can lead to a loss of independence. Such losses can include things many people take for granted, like reading the newspaper.

For nearly 14 years, the Lexington-based Central Kentucky Radio Eye has been working to help people with visual or physical impairment regain some of their independence by reading printed material over the airwaves, said Margaret Chase, chairwoman and executive director of CKRE.

"We read dozens and dozens of local newspapers, magazines and weeklies, and we do other special programing as well," Chase said. "We also broadcast, for the benefit of our listeners, some nationally produced programming."

CKRE is a closed-circuit radio station, which means that the programming is not available on AM or FM radio frequencies. Instead, CKRE provides pre-tuned radios free of charge to its listeners. In order to receive a pre-tuned radio in the mail from CKRE, potential

listeners are required to complete a short application form and have it signed by a physician, social worker, librarian or other professional who knows the applicant's disability.

Diane Wachs, who has been a volunteer reader for about a year, started reading after a friend who volunteers at the station recruited her. Wachs' father was diagnosed with macular degeneration and has been a listener since 1998.

"I look forward to doing this. I look forward to coming in on Sunday and spending two hours reading the paper. Many people never have the time to do that," she said. "One reason I feel like this is so important, (blindness) is one thing that really scares all of us."

Chase agreed.

"It is a very frightening situation," she said, "losing one's vision and not being able to access the same information as everybody else."

CKRE relies heavily on volunteers to read the news. The reading service radio station, which hired its first paid employee last year to supervise the studio, relies almost exclusively on volunteers to read the news and run the control board.

Locally produced programming is broadcast from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on weekdays, and on slightly shorter hours on weekends. [EST = UT -5]

Each Friday from 10:30 to 11 a.m., volunteers read The Winchester Sun on the air. The Sun has donated a subscription to the radio station since Alfred Crabb founded the service in 1990.

The national programming, which includes readings from a number of national news magazines, broadcasts through a national satellite feed from the New York-based InTouch Network from 2 p.m. until 8 a.m.

Volunteers, generally 60 per week, logged more than 7,350 hours at the station last year, according to a chart on the studio wall. Readers and control board operators who give their time, such as Wachs or Harrison Vickers, have a variety of reasons for volunteering.

Vickers, of Richmond, a volunteer who has operated the control board for two years, received a call from a woman whose mother had been a listener for 10 years, but whose radio no longer received the station's broadcast. The radio was replaced.

"It's something they look forward to every day," Vickers said of the station's listeners. "You'd be surprised at the number of people who really do listen to the programming."

Studio supervisor Vanessa Oliver also was a volunteer who operated the control board for a year before taking her current job, the station's first and only paid position. Oliver said she became involved in the station because she enjoys helping people.

One doesn't have to be legally blind to qualify for the program, just unable to read small print, such as newspapers, Oliver said.

"Newsprint is a standard for gauging vision disability," she said.

Although CKRE's listeners tend to be older - the average listener is more than 70 years old - there is no set age of listeners. The oldest listener is 98 years old, while the youngest is 14, Chase said.

Many people rely on newspapers to receive detailed information on events, Chase said. Television and commercial radio news provide soundbites, but generally have little substance, she said.

"Detailed information is only available in newspapers, magazines and printed materials," she said. "You can't get that anywhere else. People want to hear that detailed news and information ... and that is what we provide. ... That's the gap we fill for people with visual or physical impairment. We give people that access to information that they normally couldn't have."

It is difficult to make an accurate determination of how many listeners there are in the region because some radios may be listened to by more than one person, but Chase estimates the number to be around 1,500 on station-owned radios alone.

Clark County is one of 15 primary Central Kentucky counties reached by the radio service, which is located at the University of Kentucky. Twenty more counties are listed in the outer ring of the broadcast coverage area as secondary listening areas. CKRE serves approximately 50 listeners in Winchester and 150 in communities surrounding Winchester, but Chase said she would like to see the number of people served here grow.

In spite of the success stories, CKRE does have many needs. Because the station receives no public money, instead relying on donations from organizations and private individuals, it operates "on a shoestring," Chase said.

"One thing we're trying to do is raise money to replace our control board," she said. "We've been having trouble with it and problems with the microphones. This equipment is over 14 years old and it only has a life-expectancy of 10 years. It's clearly living on borrowed time, so

we're desperately trying to raise money to replace it."

A new control board, which controls audio levels on the microphones, recorded discs and the national satellite feed, would cost $15,000. The pre-tuned radios CKRE provides its listeners cost about $100 each and have to be replaced from time to time. CKRE now requests a one-time $25 donation from new listeners to help defray costs, but does not require the money for the service.

On the air with CKRE

Who's eligible:

* Any person who cannot see to read due to blindness or visual impairment.

* Any person who cannot hold or turn a page due to a physical disability such as stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, arthritis, aging, etc.

* Any person with a temporary visual or physical disability, caused by illness, injury or surgery, which prohibits them from reading the printed word.

For more information:

Call (859) 257-2702 or write to Central Kentucky Radio Eye, University Station Box 1030, Lexington, Kentucky 40506 (via Paul David, DXLD)

From the description, it`s obviously using a subcarrier, and is *not* ``closed circuit``, and *is* on an FM frequency (gh, DXLD)

** U S A. HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STEPPING DOWN

(Feb 4, 2004) --- Lousiana Republican Billy Tauzin announced February 3 that he will step down as chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee February 16 and will not run for relection in November. Tauzin's panel is the parent committee of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, which has under its consideration two Amateur Radio-related bills: HR 713, the Spectrum Protection Act of 2003, and HR 1478, the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act of 2003. One of the two Amateur Radio licensees in the US House --- Rep Greg Walden, WB7OCE, an Oregon Republican --- sits on the subcommittee. Washington sources say Tauzin originally was rumored to be in line for the lobbying position at the Motion Pictures Association of America. It now appears --- based in part on the fact that Tauzin recused himself from a pharmaceutical-related hearing last week --- that he may be headed to the Pharmacuetical Manufacturers

Association. Texas Republican Joe Barton appears in line to replace Tauzin as full committee chairman. Barton also serves on the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, and he`s said to have a strong interest in energy issues. Barton has not yet signed on as a cosponsor of either HR 713 or HR 1478 (ARRL via John Norfolk, DXLD)

** WESTERN SAHARA [non]. Dear Glenn: I just happened to notice that in the Jan 2004 issue of MT, in your Shortwave Broadcasting column, what I presume was a "helpful" editor at the magazine changed my report of programming on Western Sahara radio. I *had* written in my original email to you:

``The program has been commentary interspersed between exceptionally interesting and beautiful vocal music with what sounds like an oud (and percussion) accompaniment,``

...which was changed to the following:

``...interspersed between exceptionally interesting and beautiful vocal music with what sounds like loud and percussion accompaniment...``

rendering this as a rather meaningless description, with poor syntax to boot. FYI, as you probably know, the oud is a musical instrument. The Merriam-Webster dictionary describes it as being "of the lute family used in southwest Asia and northern Africa" -- that's what I heard, and that's what I meant! Best, (Steve Waldee, CA, DX LISTENING DIGEST) Look for this as a correxion in April, with an oud illo (gh)

** ZAMBIA. 4965, The Voice, 0243-0309, Jan. 4, English, Contemporary religious music with testimonials by featured artist. Gospel version of "Amazing Grace" at tune-out. Surprisingly fair signal tho no ID noted with announcer's thick accent difficult to follow along with (Scott R. Barbour, Jr., Intervale, NH, R75, MLB-1, RS longwire with RBA balun, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

UNIDENTIFIED. 13790 on with Big Band music at 2154 Feb 4, weak signal. Not // to 12172 and 9320 that also have Big Band music and which are coming in fair to good (Hans Johnson, Naples FL, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD) The latter two surely WWRB. Nothing about 13790 testing on the WWRB website, but they do have a new 100 kW (gh, DXLD)

~~~~~~

POWERLINE COMMUNICATIONS
++++++++++++++++++++++++
~~~~~~

BPL POWERLINE COMMUNICATIONS COMING TO ROCHESTER MN.
HBC tests 'plug-in' cable television (they mean internet-ds)
By DAVID KROTZ, Lee Newspapers

In the very near future, every electric outlet in the house could provide high speed Internet access, if a new technology being tested by Winona Minn.'s Hiawatha Broadband Communications proves viable.

On Monday, HBC and Rochester Public Utilities announced they will work together to test offering broadband communications over existing power lines in Rochester homes.

They aren't alone in testing the new approach for providing high speed Internet access, but "It's definitely leading edge, the first trial in the upper Midwest, said HBC president Gary Evans. Other tests are under way in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Missouri and Virginia.

Yesterday, the municipal utility in Manassas, Virginia declared itself the first utility to launch a broadband power line service to its customers. It expects to launch Internet through the power lines to 2,200 homes next week and the entire city by mid-year.

HBC and the Rochester utility hope to follow close behind. Evans said they hope to have their planning complete by Feb. 16 and then test the service in the spring with about two dozen houses over several months.

"Assuming that's satisfactory, we would then do a market trial with several hundred consumers," Evans said. After examining the technology, its costs compared to competition and any problems that crop up, HBC would then consider offering Rochester customers the Internet over household power lines beginning in the fall.

Said Larry Koshire, RPU general manager, "HBC's invitation to jointly investigate ways to utilize this new technology came at an opportune time."

Both HBC and RPU had independently studied power line technology leading up to the joint venture. The test of the technology will be planned and monitored by The Shpigler Group, a New York-based management and consulting service.

David Shpigler has extensive experience in broadband power line technology, Koshire said.

David Krotz is a reporter for the Winona (Minn.) Daily News
(La Crosse Tribune, Feb 4, via Dan Sampson, WI, DXLD)

RADIO EQUIPMENT FORUM

++++++++++++++++++++

ANOTHER NEW CHEAP RADIO

Hi, Glenn! There's yet another utterly cheap analog SW/MW/FM/TV radio out there; I just got one to check it over. Would you believe $8.80 with free shipping (as part of a larger order)?

Before anyone gets enthused, I must add that it is also a wretched performer. It IS a bit better than the fabled "Bell+Howell"; I can actually receive a few SW signals on it, and in some cases the dial calibration actually approximates the transmitter frequency.

The amazing thing about it is that it uses two D-cell batteries. That's right, not AA cells, but big fat D-cells! I suspect that battery life will be next to forever (maybe due to the fact that you'll never turn it on again after trying it out the first few times? :-)

But it actually sounds OK on local MW and FM, once you get it tuned right. Has a stereo headphone jack and the audio through that is pretty good; FM reception is mono only, though.

So what is it? What is it called? THAT's a mystery! There is NO name or model number or ID of any kind on the radio itself. The one I got has a sticker on the speaker grille that says "No 1 HI-FI", but the only other printing on the radio is the line "12BAND FM/TV/MW/SW1-9 RECEIVER" under the analog dial and "MADE IN CHINA" on the back. Other than that is the interesting "CAUTION new battery and old one do not use together" by the battery-arrangement graphic on the rear, and labels on the tuning & volume controls and the jacks (headphones and power).

In the picture of the radio on the catalog sheet from which I ordered, there is different printing on the radio; it shows a model designation of "HS-912R". Probably totally meaningless.

It shares the strange dial marking of the TV channels with the Bell+Howell that shows channel 5 in the same frequency area as the low end of the US FM band, above 88 MHz. The TV coverage is done by extending the FM band down to a marked "64 MHz". It shows channels 2 through 5, but the only audio I was able to tune were channels 4 & 5. (There's no 3 here.)

FM is weird. I get two complete sets of coverage of the FM spectrum, one on the part of the dial where they are supposed to be, and one down lower where the TV coverage is supposed to be. So picking out the TV audio from amidst the images of the FM stations is difficult. It IS

understandable once tuned in, though. For some odd reason, all the strong FMs around here come in clearly EXCEPT 88.1, KDHX, an eclectic station with probably the best selection of music programs of any. I can tune it, but it is very difficult to get a clean signal. NPR from KWMU on 90.7 is usable; the classical station KFUO on 99.1 comes in fine.

MW is marked up to only 1600 kHz. I was able to hear an ID mentioning "1670" when pushing the tuning up as far as it would go while listeing last night, so that seems to be as much X-band as you get. Tuning MW is very fiddly; there's a lot of backlash in the string-and-pointer mechanism. When you do get a station tuned in, it sounds OK, but strong locals overwhelm for many kHz on each side.

OK, you've all been waiting for the SW evaluation. Well, I WAS able to hear Dr. Gene Scott and Brother Stair. This is not much of a recommendation... :-) The problem with this thing is that it is SO sensitive that it is overwhelmed and swamped by the local FMs that all the SW bands, day and night, are filled with roaring distorted images. I wonder if the place in China where these are made has no local FMs? You cannot extend the antenna over one segment, or the bands are completely filled with this noise. Just moving the antenna up to vertical from being stowed next to the case will cause much interference. Touching it does the same. (The same sensitivity applies to the FM, too; it works best with the antenna fully collapsed.)

I'd really like to try this out in the desert far away from all local broadcasters. I bet that you could pull the antenna out and actually get a batch of SW signals, and maybe SW images instead of local-station crud.

I tried it out in the daytime and got only a couple stations on 17 and 15 MHz bands; at night, WWCR seemed to come in best with a few other signals, but no BBC or even WBCQ. The signals that I was able to identify were fairly close to the right places on the dial, like within 50 kHz or so. Better than I actually expected. But so much of the dial was filled with the noise that it was pretty frustrating. Wouldn't want someone to use this as an intro to SW, at least in a city.

It came from one of those mail-order-junk places that sends out sheafs of annoying little sheets instead of a bound catalog: Starcrest of California (19465 Brennan Ave, Perris, CA 92599) No 800 # -- 909-657-2793. The stock # is 11-8608-1. The nominal price is $10 but the $8.80 I paid was from a "discount price list" they send out with every other mailing or so. There's a $3.00 handling charge on every order, but free shipping on over $15 orders. The company sells a vast array of many different housewares, costume jewelry, and kitsch. There are

actually some good things amongst the junk, but going thru those loose sheets instead of leafing thru a real catalog is very irritating.

Note that they also sell the Bell+Howell, actually for a dollar or so more than this one. This thing is actually a reasonable MW/FM radio, and with the D-cell power I think it is not a bad deal for someone wanting a little radio. Just don't expect to get SW with any reliability. If anyone out in the rural areas gets one, please let us know how well it works there. Maybe it isn't bad without my strong-signal environment. 73, (Will Martin (St. Louis, MO), DX LISTENING DIGEST)

PROPAGATION
++++++++++

The following is on Sangean`s website, getting people started in shortwave with a gross misunderstanding of propagation.

She implies that radio signals zip along at light speed in space (but not on Earth). For all practical purposes, they also propagate at light speed through the atmosphere.

Earth does NOT block signals at the horizon. Line-of-sight signals are simply out of sight, but it`s gradual, not like a brick wall. And is NOT true of AM (groundwave) at all. The ionosphere also propagates signals, but mediumwave stations can cover far beyond the horizon as they bend around the earth`s curvature.

She ignores the E-layer, just as important as the F-layer; and the effects of the D-layer in absorbing signals in the daytime!

This section is supposed to be about SW, but the article quoted keeps talking about AM and FM, which propagate entirely differently from each other and from SW!

AM signals certainly can hop multiple times around the world, but that`s rare DX. This happens on shortwave routinely!

``The ionosphere bends signals best at night because the Sun is no longer ionizing the atmosphere then. That's why you pick up distant AM signals at night.``

The ionosphere wouldn`t bend any signals anytime if it weren`t ionized! F2 layer on HF of course gets ionized in the daytime, but the residual effects last into the evening, reaching their lowest point shortly before sunrise. Again she`s mixing up what happens on MW and SW. The higher SW frequencies propagate *better* in the daytime than at night. Any nascent SW listener really needs to know this!

And what`s all this about water in the atmosphere? This factor is all mixed up, too. Humidity is normally highest in the early morning hours after sunrise, gradually declining as the sun heats things up. There`s more water vapor in the air in the morning, not less --- ever notice when fog usually forms? It`s not an obstacle to FM propagation, but likely to help it, at least indirectly.

Water doesn`t weaken FM signals compared to AM. Other propagational factors are far more important. In fact, rain only becomes a problem far above the FM band, in the SHF area and higher. Raindrops are one thing, water vapor quite another in impact on signal propagation. Humidity and temperature inversions are a very important factor in propagating FM signals beyond line of sight, and have little effect on AM.

Now that you`ve been warned, here`s the article (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Shortwave 101 - the more you know... [sic]

Q: Why do AM radio signals coming from a distance seem much stronger at night, especially when cloudy and why do FM signals seem stronger in the early mornings.

U.S. Navy
Wave travel: line of sight and bouncing off the ionosphere [caption]

Earth's atmosphere changes how radio waves travel. Out in space they zip along at light speed and travel vast distances: from Earth to Pluto, for example.

Here on Earth, when a signal travels in a straight line from transmitter to receiver, Earth blocks the signal at the horizon. Viewed from eye level, the horizon is about 2.5 miles away but, from the top of a 500-foot transmission tower, it's about 100 miles distant. Line-of-sight signals, thus, go about 100 miles.

When we pick up an AM signal from farther than that, a cloud-like layer of ionized particles in the air (called the ionosphere F-layer) bent the radio wave down to reach us. The drawing at the right shows this. When a radio wave enters the F-layer air, it slows down and therefore bends to a new direction. A soda straw in a glass of water appears bent due to the same phenomenon.

The ionosphere bends signals best at night because the Sun is no longer ionizing the atmosphere then. That's why you pick up distant AM signals at night. An AM signal can hop all the way around the world at

night, bending down from the ionosphere and reflecting back up from Earth: hopping in that fashion and ultimately going vast distances.

On the other hand, FM radio waves go right through the ionosphere. Consequently, most FM signals are line-of-sight.

Water in the atmosphere weakens all signals but the higher frequencies more than the lower ones. For this reason, water reduces FM strength much more than AM since FM frequencies are about 100 times greater than AM. In fact, AM is not much affected even by rain. This argues against AM signals being stronger on cloudy nights. However, it may explain why you pick up FM signals better in the morning.

"FM repeater stations, which rely on long distance pick up of an FM signal, often experience reduced signal level during the hotter summer months..." says Lewis Downey, engineer at KUER FM in Salt Lake City, Utah. This may be due to more moisture in the air during summer, which weakens FM signals. The morning, however, has cooler temperatures and less water vapor in the air. Consequently, the air contains less water to disrupt the FM signal. Thus, the FM signal is somewhat stronger in the cool of the morning.

(from an article by April Holladay, science correspondent, Jan. 23, 2002 in USA Today!) http://sangean.com/101.html (via DXLD)

PROPAGATION NEWS FROM RSGB

Solar data for the period from the 26th of January to the 1st of February, compiled by Neil Clarke, G0CAS, http://www.g0cas.demon.co.uk/main.htm

On the 27th and the 28th of January the sun became void of any sunspots. These were the first spotless days of this declining phase of this sunspot cycle. Unfortunately, this will become more and more common as we approach sunspot minimum, which is due around the end of 2006. At solar minimum several weeks can pass without any spots at all being visible. Lean times lie ahead. Solar activity was very low on the 28th and 29th and low on the remaining days. The largest solar flare of the period was a C6/SF on the 26th. The solar flux declined from 98 on the 26th to 87 by the 29th but then recovered to 97 by the 1st. The average was 93. The 90-day solar flux average on the 1st was 121, that's 11 units down on last week. X-ray flux levels declined to A7.5 units by the 29th, and the average was B1 units. The geomagnetic field was unsettled throughout. The most disturbed day was the 28th with an Ap index of 19 units. The average was Ap 15 units. The ACE spacecraft saw solar wind speeds increase from 390 kilometres per second to 740 by the 30th. Particle densities increased to 20 particles per cubic centimetre on the 27th, otherwise, densities

remained below 10 particles per cubic centimetre. Bz varied between minus and plus 10 nanoTeslas except on the 30th, when it fluctuated between minus and plus 15 nanoTeslas.

Geomagnetic activity resulted in mediocre propagation on the higher HF bands, though 15 and 20 metres remained reasonably reliable, and tended to stay open a shade longer as the period of daylight increased in the northern hemisphere: Australia, for example, remained workable on 20 metres most mornings until lunch time. Although 28 MHz was below expectations there were nevertheless quite good, short openings to Africa and South America, tending to peak around 1500 UTC.

And finally the solar forecast. This week the active side of the sun is expected to be looking our way. Solar activity should be mostly low. A small M-class solar flare cannot be totally ruled out. Solar flux should be at its highest for this week today or tomorrow, then a gradual decline to around 110 units by next weekend is expected. Geomagnetic activity should be at unsettled levels for most of the week. MUFs during daylight hours at equal latitudes should be about 30 MHz for the south and 27 MHz for the north. The darkness hour low should be around 8 MHz. Paths this week to Australia should have a maximum usable frequency, with a 50 per cent success rate, of about 25 MHz. The optimum working frequency, with a 90 per cent success rate, should be around 19 MHz. The best time to try this path will be between 0800 and 1100 UT. As always, the quoted times are for operating around the MUF level. Under most circumstances, you will find that, for example, 20 metres should remain open up to a couple of hours later.

The RSGB propagation news is also available in a Saturday update, posted every Saturday evening and for more on propagation generally, see http://www.rsgb.org/society/psc.htm (Radio Society of Great Britain GB2RS Main News for February 8 posted February 4 by G4RGA on uk.radio.amateur via John Norfolk, DXLD) ###